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5-12-12

**Jack:**

Good Morning,

My name is Jack Mackey and I am a 7th grader at George Washington Middle School. I am here with my classmates Tori Cook, Sarah Castle, and Sydney Collins. The George Washington Middle School students care about the Winkler Botanical Preserve. We have a petition signed by 416 students from our school agreeing to the following: "Importance: George Washington Middle School students found high levels of nitrogen and phosphorus at the Winkler Botanical Preserve in October of 2011. The preserve is used as an educational facility for Alexandria City students. Winkler is a place where children of an urban community can experience nature in its true form. Many students at the middle school have fond memories of being at the preserve and would like to ensure that future Alexandria students have the opportunity to learn from this living laboratory." Students who signed the petition agreed to us establishing a long-term monitoring program at Winkler. We are here to ensure the present and future health of the Winkler preserve.

**Sydney:**

Since finding high levels of nitrogen and phosphorus at the preserve, students at our school have been investigating what could have caused these levels to be so high. The high levels of nitrogen and phosphorus cannot be ignored for if they are, there could be negative effects on the Winkler Preserve. An example of nitrogen and phosphorus harming the environment is the current condition of the Chesapeake Bay. The high levels of contaminants in the Bay have caused and are causing dead zones and algae blooms. This is endangering much aquatic life.

**Tori:**

The Winkler Botanical Preserve is an integral part of our community. The Preserve is an excellent place for educational programs, and Alexandria City students learn a lot from these camps and field trips. My classmates and I have done water testing at Winkler, and found surprisingly high levels of nitrogen and phosphorus. We are currently partnered with Jodie Smolik, the director

of the Winkler Preserve, to implement a long term monitoring program with money we received from a grant. We think that by continuing to investigate these levels, we will be able to find the source of this contamination. We don't want any storm water runoff from new impervious surfaces or future impervious surfaces to harm the Winkler Preserve. Alexandria needs to ensure the health of Winkler for generations to come. Here are our 416 signatures to prevent stormwater runoff from polluting Winkler.

Thank you for your time.

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